# *Communication is central to the teaching/learning process. Knowledge is valuable in itself, but no matter how much one knows, there is no guarantee he or she can teach that knowledge to others. Communication is the crucial link between a knowledgeable teacher and a learning student. From the vantage point of a professional educator, then, the difference between knowing and teaching is communication in the classroom (Hurt, Scott, & McCroskey, 1978).*

**COURSE SYLLABUS Tuesday 6:30 (Fell 123)**

**Instructor:** Cheri Simonds, Ph.D. **Office Hours:** T 4:00-6:00

**Office:**  427 Fell Hall **Phone:** 309-438-7550

**Email:**  cjsimon@ilstu.edu

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

483 Seminar in Communication Education: Instructional Communication

Survey of Instructional Communication including the communication theories and research that inform teaching practice across educational contexts.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the theories, research, and practice that identify communication skills and competencies in the educational setting. Although grounded in instructional communication theory, the course will also include an applied element. Two broad units of material will be covered in the seminar: (a) an applied approach to communication for teachers and trainers, and (b) an examination of how theory and research inform practice.

**COURSE RATIONALE**

Instructional communication highlights the central role of communication in the teaching and learning process. Teachers from all disciplines (and for all age groups) use communication in the classroom to foster student connections, learning, and emotional development. This course explores the theories, research, and practice that identify communication skills and competencies in the educational setting. This course will help students become more competent and confident in their teaching endeavors.

**COURSE GOALS**

1. To improve the communication competencies of students in an academic setting. That is to develop one’s knowledge, skill, motivation, and judgment about message choices and likely outcomes with colleagues, students, administrators, and parents.
2. To develop the student’s awareness of the dynamics of classroom interaction. Specifically, to understand and put into practice the communication principles that support a positive classroom environment.
3. To improve the student’s ability to synthesize and communicate clearly instructional content to a diverse audience. Specifically, to develop teaching skills in verbal interaction by practice as well as collaborative relationships.
4. To increase the student’s understanding of the variables significant to students in a traditional, nontraditional, and multicultural environment. Also, to sharpen their ability to analyze and evaluate the communication of others in a diverse environment.

5. To increase the student’s understanding of the theories and research of instructional

communication variables and how they inform best teaching practices.

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Simonds, C. J., Wright, A. M., & Cooper, P. J. (2018). *Communication for teachers and trainers.* Scottsdale, TX: Fountainhead Press.

Pyrczak, F., & Bruce, R. R. (2014). *Writing empirical research reports (8th ed.)*. Pyrczak Publishing: Glendale, CA.

**REQUIRED READINGS (on ReggieNet)**

# Houser, M. L., Hosek, A. (Eds.) (2017). *Handbook of instructional communication: Rhetorical and relational perspectives (2nd ed.)*. Routledge.

P. Witt (Ed.) (2016). *Handbooks of communication science, 16.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Gray, P. L. (2008). Leading classroom activities. In Hugenburg, L. W., Morreale, S., Worley, D. W., Hugenberg, B., & Worley, D. A. (Eds.). *Best practices in the basic communication course: A training manual for instructors.* (pp. 81-90). Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company.

**ADDITIONAL READINGS FROM MEMBERS OF THE SEMINAR**

**RECOMMENDED READINGS**

Comadena, M., Hunt, S., & Simonds, C. (2007). The Effects of Teacher Clarity, Nonverbal Immediacy, and Caring on Student Motivation, Affective- and Cognitive Learning: A Research Note. *Communication Research Reports24 (3),* 241-248.

Friedrich, G. W. (1987). *Journal of Thought, 22,* 4-10.

Friedrich, G. W. (1989). A view from the office of the SCA president. *Communication Education, 38,* 297-302.

Hunt, S. Simonds, C., & Cooper, P. (2002). Communication and teacher education: Exploring a communication course for all teachers. *Communication Education 51 (1),* 81-94.

Hunt, S. K., Wright, A. M., & Simonds, C. J. (2014). Securing the future of Communication Education: Advancing an advocacy and research agenda for the 21st Century. *Communication Education, 100th Anniversary Issue,* 449-461.

Mazer, J., Murphy, R., & Simonds, C. (2007). I’ll See You On “Facebook”: The Effects of Computer-Mediated Teacher Self-Disclosure on Student Motivation, Affective Learning, and Classroom Climate. *Communication Education, 56,* 1-17*.*

McCroskey, L. L., Teven, J. J., Minielli, M. C., & McCroskey, V. P. (2014). James C. McCroskey’s instructional communication legacy: Collaborations, mentorships, teachers, and students. *Communication Education, 100th Anniversary Issue,* 63(4), 283-307.

Morreale, S. Backlund, P., & Sparks, L. (2014). Communication education and instructional communication: Genesis and evolution as fields of inquiry. *Communication Education, 100th Anniversary Issue,* 63(4), 344-354.

Russ, T., Simonds, C., & Hunt, S. (2002). Coming Out in the Classroom . . . An Occupational Hazard?:The Influence of Sexual Orientation On Teacher Credibility and Perceived Student Learning, *Communication Education, 51(3),* 311-324.

Simonds, C. (2001). Reflecting on the relationship between instructional communication theory and teaching practices. *Communication Studies 52 (4),* 260-265.

Simonds, C. (1997). Classroom Understanding: Expanding the notion of teacher clarity. *Communication Research Reports, 14(3),* 279-290.

Simonds, C. (1997). Challenge behavior in the college classroom. *Communication Research Reports, 14(4).* 481-492.

Sorensen, G.A., & Christophel, D.M. (1992). The communication perspective. In. V.P. Richmond & J.C. McCroskey (Eds.), *Power in the classroom: Communication, control, and concern* (pp. 35-46). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Sprinkle, R., Hunt, S., Simonds, C., & Comadena, M. (2006). Fear in the classroom: An examination of teachers' use of fear appeals and students' learning outcomes*. Communication Education, 55,* 389-402*.*

Waldeck, J.H., Kearney, P., & Plax, T.G. (2001). Instructional and developmental communication theory and research in the 1990s: Extending the agenda for the 21st century. In W.B. Gudykunst (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 24* (pp. 207-229). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

*Professional Courtesy.* As this is a graduate seminar, I feel it is unnecessary to emphasize issues such as respect for the class (attendance, turning assignments in on time, etc.) and the members of the seminar (respecting others' opinions, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition). I do, however, want to be clear about my expectations. I believe graduate school is an experience designed to bring professional individuals together to increase and expand knowledge. Thus, I will expect your behaviors and attitudes towards this course to reflect professional courtesy. If I believe a student is not meeting my expectations (e.g., excessive absences, inadequate work, disrespect for others, etc.), I will notify you immediately and a decision will be made concerning your need to drop the course.

*Deadlines*. All assignments must be completed on schedule and must be handed in when due. No makeups or extensions will be permitted unless the student contacts the instructor **prior** to the due date and has a verifiable excuse. One letter grade will be deducted for each day that any assignment is late.

*Academic Misconduct*. All University Policies concerning academic misconduct will be upheld in this course. Of particular concern in a course with written and oral assignments is the issue of plagiarism. **Plagiarism is defined by Webster's (1989) as "the appropriations or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (p. 1100). In other words, plagiarism is stealing.** You must cite your sources accurately and consistently in both your oral and written assignments.

*Special Needs.* Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

*Absences due to Student Bereavement*. Students who experience the death of an immediate family member or relative as defined in the University Student Bereavement Policy will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and/or travel considerations. Students are responsible for providing appropriate documentation to the Dean of Students office and for contacting the instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements for completing missed work. More information is available in the Student Bereavement Policy at <http://www.policy.illinoisstate.edu/2-1-27.shtml>

*Mental Health Resources.* Life at college can get very complicated. Students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at Counseling.IllinoisState.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

**GRADING**

Your grade for this course will depend on how many points you earn from an instructional communication lesson, research summary presentation and paper, participation, and a teaching portfolio. **NOTE: Failure to turn in any of the course requirements may result in failure of the course.**

**Topics for your Research Summary, Instructional Communication Lesson, and Final Review of Literature Paper:** Based on our discussions of the Simonds, Wright, & Cooper (2018) text, you will choose a topic that is carried over in either Houser & Hosek (2017) or Witt (2016). This topic will form the basis of your research summary, instructional communication lesson, and your final review of literature paper. You will begin by examining the literature on your topic, identifying another construct or variable that you believe to be related to your topic, and providing annotations that will culminate in your research summary presentation. Once you have a grasp of the research, you will then present an instructional communication lesson on that topic, and then using the research from the annotated bibliography, write a final review of literature extending and analyzing the research on the topic to explore a research question or hypothesis.

**Research Summary Presentation (50 points):** You will be responsible for a presentation on the current state of research on your topic/s in instructional communication. Each student will provide class members with one or two example articles and an annotated bibliography on the state of research in this area. Your annotated bibliography will provide the framework for your final paper and help you to organize, synthesize, and evaluate the research in a meaningful way. Annotations go above and beyond the abstract to evaluate the contribution of the entry to the overall topic/s. You should address the following information in your annotation: 1) What is the argument made in this study? What theoretical constructs are examined (explain the terms)? In other words, how does each entry contribute to the body of knowledge about the topic and/or allow you to argue for your research questions or hypotheses? How will the entries inform your review of literature (e.g., context, theory, relevance and importance, gaps, rationale for study, population, or method)? You should highlight the specific portion of the article that will inform your review of literature and make a notation on how you will use it. Be sure that you do not make any claims that are not supported by the data from the article. Depending on the topic and size of the group, you should have 15-25 entries. The evening of your assigned presentation, please provide a copy of your annotated bibliography to every member of the class (including your instructor).

**Instructional Communication Lesson (150 points):** You will be responsible for providing class members with a reading from Houser & Hosek (2017) or Witt (2016) and an article on a particular instructional communication topic based on your research summary. You may elect to use a different source for your lesson, but will need to make an argument as to how your source addresses an instructional communication variable. You will then be responsible for facilitating a class session about that topic. The class session will include a mechanism for assessing student preparation and participation, an overview of the relevant topic, a student-led discussion, and an experiential activity. Evaluation will be based on your ability to accurately present current research findings, to effectively organize the class discussion, to ask thought-provoking questions, as well as your ability to effectively engage and involve students in the learning process. Details and further instruction will be provided.

Your planning document (***just to the instructor***) is due the evening you present your topic.

**Review of Literature Final Paper (100 points)**

A review of literature offers an original way introducing, establishing the importance of, and providing a context for a research problem (see Pyrczak & Bruce, 2014). Rather than being a mere descriptive summary of the research, it goes beyond to develop insights, provide evaluations, and to make arguments for your research questions or hypotheses. Reviews of literature for purposes of this class should include a) an introduction of the problem, b) a summary of the relevant research related to your topic/s and a rationale for why your topics are related, c) comments on the relevance and importance of the research, d) identification of gaps in the research, e) a rationale for how the current study addresses those gaps, and f) identification of theories relevant to the research (not necessarily in this order). You may choose to conduct a small research project for this class (whereupon you will need to obtain IRB approval), but this project would also include a review of literature.

**Class Participation (50 points):** You are responsible for reading the assigned material prior to class. You are expected to discuss the readings and your ideas informally each session. Because this course is a seminar, not a lecture class, your own involvement is imperative. For our discussions to be productive you will need to (1) show knowledge of readings and have given thought to what you have read, (2) articulate your ideas clearly and argue effectively for your positions, (3) contribute to a lively interchange of ideas, and (4) respond thoughtfully to the comments of others. Failure to contribute to class discussion, in a meaningful way, will negatively affect your participation grade. Physical presence is necessary, but not sufficient for participation.

**Teaching Portfolio (100 points):** The portfolio is a collection of material accumulated over the semester that represents your insights, observations, experiences and reflections on communication in the classroom. This is your opportunity to see material evidence of your accomplishments. Your portfolio will include a teaching philosophy, a reflection on your instructional communication lesson, a reflection on a teaching challenge, and a teaching development plan. Details and further instruction will be provided.

**Summary of Grading:**

Research Summary Presentation 50 points

Presentation 25

Annotated Bibliography 25

Instructional Communication Lesson 150 points

Planning 50

Implementation 100

Review of Literature Final Paper 100 points

Participation 50 points

Teaching Portfolio 100 points

Teaching Philosophy 25

Reflection on IC Lesson 25

Reflection on a Teaching Challenge 25

Teaching Development Plan 25

**Total 450 points**

The grading scale is a standard ten-percentage point scale:

90-100% = A; 80%-89% = B; 70%-79% = C; 60-69% = D; below 60% = F

Extra Credit Opportunities: You may receive 3 extra credit points for participating in any of the studies in the School of Communication’s Research Pool. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and may not necessarily appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student’s responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies in the School of Communication’s Research Pool. The Research Pool is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Pool and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Pool can be accessed via:

<https://sites.google.com/site/isucomresearch/>

The course instructor will get evidence of participation from the researcher(s) who administer the research studies at the conclusion of the semester; however, it is *your* responsibility to make sure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the study. Before participating in a study, **please be sure to have your name, ULID** (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu)**, instructor name, and course and section number ready**, as you will need to provide these to receive credit. Research Credit can only be applied to one course for each study, unless specified otherwise in the Research Pool. After the final exam there will be no further opportunities for extra credit or to otherwise improve your grade.

Please also be aware that federal guidelines indicate that instructors offering extra credit for research participation must offer a reasonable alternative (such as a research paper) for students who want to earn extra credit but do not want to participate in a study.

**INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATION LESSON**

**ASSIGNMENT SHEET**

**Purpose**

To aid students in identifying the necessary steps in planning and implementing content material in concert with instructional discussion and activities in the classroom. To provide students the opportunity to utilize and budget class time for implementing a given objective. To allow students the opportunity to facilitate and participate in a discussion.

**Assignment**

Students will be responsible for presenting either one of the Houser & Hosek (2017) or Witt (2016) chapters and a related article to the class (this related article may include one of the previous articles provided to the class at the time of the research summary). The introduction of the lesson should provide an overview of the material in the chapter as well as provide transitional links from one point to the next. Try to emphasize not only *what* is in the text, but *why* it is in the text. Also, *how* does the information contribute to a teacher or trainer’s body of knowledge? Students will lead a constructive class discussion to synthesize and analyze the contents of the chapter and the reading. Give us something to talk and "think" about. Students will also compose and disseminate a set of reading/discussion objectives to the discussion participants the class *prior* to your facilitation. An outline and typed list of questions that will guide the class discussion should be given to the instructor. Students will facilitate an experiential activity related to the topic.

1. **Introduction**
2. Attention Getter: What rhetorical device will you use to capture our attention?
3. Set Induction: What have we learned before that will inform us now Review/Transition?
4. Objective: What will the students be able to do when the discussion is completed?

**II. Overview/Synthesis**

* 1. In a nutshell, what are the authors stressing in this chapter? What ideas, concepts, and instruction are important (hint: what major topics are covered and why?)
  2. How do these things relate to previous discussions we have had?
  3. How does the information provided in this chapter relate to and/or help us as future teachers? Give some real-life applications.

**III. Class Discussion** Refer to Simonds, Wright, & Cooper (2018), Chapter 7 for guidelines.

Reading Objectives Discussion Questions

**(Student Preparation) (Teacher Preparation and Prompts)**

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| --- | --- |
| **X.1 Include the Reading Objective Question here:**   * Provide a bullet point list of the answers to the reading objectives here.   **X.2 Next Reading Objective**   * And answer… | **X.1 Label Line of Questioning here:**  **Structure:** Provide a structure comment statement here. Example: There are a variety of instructional strategies that teachers may choose from including lecture, activities and instructional discussions. Let’s talk about some of the advantages and disadvantages of the discussion method.  **Discussion Prompt:** Start with the discussion prompt from the chapter. Example: How will you decide when to use the discussion method in your own class? Are there certain subjects that lend themselves to the discussion method?  **Additional Question:** Add in a few higher order questions here. Example: What ethical guidelines should be discussed with students prior to participating in a discussion?  **Experiential Activity and Debrief:**  **X.2 New Line of Questioning based on X.2 RO to the left.** |

**IV. Conclusion**

1. Please take mental notes of the progression of the discussion and summarize the main ideas covered.
2. You’ll also want to provide a memorable close.

**TEACHING PORTFOLIO (100 PTS)**

The portfolio is a collection of material accumulated over the semester that represents your insights, observations, experiences and reflections on communication in the classroom. This is your opportunity to see material evidence of your accomplishments.

The portfolio is evaluated on a point system as outlined below. In fact, you might want to use the following as a checklist, to ensure all necessary materials are included. The portfolio will be turned in at the end of the semester, but you should keep up with the materials to be included as the semester progresses. In other words, keep everything! **All materials for this class must be typed, double spaced, with no more than 1.25” margins and a 12-point font.**

**THE PORTFOLIO SHOULD INCLUDE:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Your Philosophy of Teaching**

This is a formal, written conception of your notions of teaching, learning, teachers, students, and the environment of the classroom. After discussing several of the readings for this course, you should begin to critically reflect on your philosophy of teaching. This is where you identify your foundational beliefs about teaching and learning and explain how you implement those beliefs into your instructional activities. The best Teaching Philosophy Statements articulate teaching philosophies that reflect significant time and effort to develop and refine and articulate the instructor’s fundamental approaches to teaching. (1-2 pages). (25 points total)

**\_\_\_\_\_Reflection on your Instructional Communication Lesson**

Self-monitoring teachers use reflection to make continual improvements to their teaching development. After presenting your instructional communication lesson, please reflect on the following: your presentation of the current research findings, assessment of student preparation for participation in class, discussion facilitation, activity facilitation, and your planning document. What did you enjoy about your lesson? What advice or alternatives would you suggest for teaching this lesson in the future? (1-2 pages). (25 points total)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Reflection on a Teaching Challenge**

Every teacher, including the best, has failures, crises, difficult situations, etc. The best teachers, however, are distinguished by how they handle and learn from these challenges. This is an opportunity for you to describe a challenge that you have faced as a teacher, how you handled it, what you learned from it, and how the experience shaped your teaching. It could be a single incident or a long-term issue, a temporary problem, or an ongoing difficulty. Choose one that best illustrates who you are as a teacher and how you have become the teacher that you are today. The best Reflections on Teaching Challenges identify a significant event or issue, describe vividly the practical and conceptual challenges encountered and responses to those challenges, and thoughtfully review the insights gained from the experiences described. (1-2 pages). (25 points total)

**\_\_\_\_\_ Teaching Development Plan.**

This is an opportunity to describe where you’ve been as a teacher (and why you were there), where you are now (and what you did to get here), and where you are going as a teacher (and specifically what you intend to do to get there). Organization is up to you, but the plan should include specifics about teaching-related decisions and activities in the past and your plans for your future that describe your evolution as a teacher. As such, it should provide a specific agenda for your ongoing development as a professional pursuing teaching excellence. The best Teaching Development Plans detail comprehensive plans that clearly describe trajectories over time, including specific short- and long-term goals and priorities as well as specific plans to pursue those goals and priorities. (1-2 pages). (25 points total)

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**SEMINAR IN INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATION**

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**Date Topic/Activity Assignment**

**Week 1**  Introduction Read/Print Syllabus

8/20 Leading Instructional Discussions Simonds et al.

Chapter 7

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8/27 Communication FoundationsSimonds et al.,

Chapter 1

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**Week 3**  Interpersonal Communication Simonds et al.,

9/3 Chapter 2

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**Week 4** Listening Simonds et al.,

9/10 Chapter 3

Language Simonds et al., Chapter 4

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**Week 5** Instructional Strategies and Lesson Planning

Simonds et al.,

9/17 Chapter 5

Presenting Content and Engagement Strategies Simonds et al.,

Chapter 6

Facilitating Activities and Collaboration

Simonds et al.,

Chapter 8

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**Week 6** Discuss Lesson Facilitation and Research Summaries

9/24

Practice Lesson Planning and Implementation Using:

Historical Roots and Trajectories of Instructional Communication

Houser et al., C. 1

Learning in Response to Instructional Communication

Witt, C. 1

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10/1 Multicultural Communication Simonds et al.,

Chapter 9

Influence Simonds et al., Chapter 10

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10/8 Chapters 1-6

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10/15

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10/22

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10/29

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11/5

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11/12

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**Week 14** Lesson Facilitation Presentations

11/19

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**Week 15** No Class—Fall Break

11/26

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**Week 16** Portfolio Presentations

12/3

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**Week 17**  Final Paper Presentations

12/10